



To the RIGHT HONOURABLE 95
 The MAYOR and ALDERMEN of the
 City of LONDON: R

The Humble Petition

Of the Colliers, Cooks, Cook-Maids, Black- smiths, Jack-makers, Brasiers, and Others,

SHEWETH; [By D. Ashurst]

THAT whereas certain *Virtuosi* Disaffected to the Government, and to the Trade and Prosperity of this Kingdom, taking upon them the Name and Title of the CATOPTRICAL VICTUALLERS, have presumed, by Gathering, Breaking, Folding, and Bundling up the Sun-Beams, by the help of certain *Glasses*, to Make, Produce, and Kindle up several New *Focus's* or Fires within these His Majesty's Dominions, and thereby to Boil, Bake, Stew, Fry, and Dress all sorts of Victuals and Provisions, to Brew, Distil Spirits, Smelt Oars, and, in general, to perform all the Offices of Culinary Fires; and are endeavouring to procure to themselves the Monopoly of this their said Invention. We beg leave humbly to represent to your Honours,

That such Grant or Patent will utterly ruin and reduce to Beggary your Petitioners, their Wives, Children, Servants, and Trades on them depending; there being nothing left to them, after the said Invention, but Warming of Cellars and Dressing of Suppers in the Winter-time. That the abolishing so considerable a branch of the Coasting Trade as that of the Colliers, will destroy the Navigation of this Kingdom. That whereas the said *Catoptrical Victuallers* talk of making use of the *Moon* by Night, as of the *Sun* by Day, they will utterly ruin the numerous Body of Tallow-Chandlers, and impair a very considerable branch of the Revenue which arises from the Tax upon Tallow and Candles.

That the said *Catoptrical Victuallers* do profane the Emanations of that Glorious Luminary the *Sun*, which is appointed to *Rule the Day*, and not to *Roast Mutton*. And we humbly conceive, It will be found contrary to the known Laws of this Kingdom, to Confine, Forestall, and Monopolize the Beams of the Sun. And whereas the said *Catoptrical Victuallers* have undertaken, by Burning-Glasses made of Ice, to Roast an Ox upon the *Thames* next Winter: We conceive all such Practices to be an Encroachment upon the Rights and Privileges of the Company of *Watermen*.

That the Diversity of Exposition of the several Kitchens in this great City, whereby some receive the Rays of the Sun sooner, and others later, will occasion great Irregularity as to the Time of Dining of the several Inhabitants, and consequently great Uncertainty and Confusion in the dispatch of Business: And to those who, by reason of their Northern Exposition, will be still forced to be at the Expences of Culinary Fires, it will reduce the Price of their Manufacture to such Inequality as is inconsistent with common Justice: And the same Inconveniency will affect Landlords in the Value of their Rents.

That

That the Use of the said Glasses will oblige Cooks and Cook-Maids to study Opticks and Astronomy, in order to know the due Distances of the said *Focus's* or Fires, and to adjust the Position of their Glasses to the several Altitudes of the Sun, varying according to the Hours of the Day, and the Seasons of the Year; which Studies, at these Years, will be highly Troublesome to the said Cooks and Cook-Maids, not to say any thing of the utter Incapacity of some of them to go through with such difficult Arts; or (which is still a greater Inconveniency) it will throw the whole Art of *Cookery* into the Hands of Astronomers and Glass-Grinders, Persons utterly unskill'd in other parts of that Profession, to the great Detriment of the Health of His Majesty's good Subjects.

That it is known by Experience, That Meat Roasted with Sun-Beams is extremely unwholesome; witness several that have dy'd suddenly after eating the Provisions of the said *Catoptrical Victuallers*; being that the Sun-Beams taken inwardly, render the Humours too Hot and Aduft, occasion great Sweatings, and dry up the Rectual Moisture.

That Sun-Beams taken inwardly, shed a Malignant Influence upon the Brain, by their natural Tendency towards the Moon; produce Madness and Distractedness at the time of the Full Moon. That the constant use of so great Quantities of this Inward Light, will occasion the Growth of Quakerism, to the Danger of the Church; and Poetry, to the Danger of the State.

That the Influences of the Constellations, through which the Sun passes, will, with his Beams, be convey'd into the Blood; and when the Sun is amongst the Horned Signs, may produce such a Spirit of Unchastity, as is dangerous to the Honour of your Worships Families.

That Mankind living much upon the Seeds and other parts of Plants, these being impregnated with the Sun-Beams, may vegetate and grow in the Bowels, a Thing of more dangerous Consequence to Human Bodies than Breeding of Worms; and this will fall heaviest upon the Poor, who live upon Roots; and the Weak and Sickly, who live upon Barley and Rue-Gruel, &c. for which we are ready to produce to your Honours the Opinions of Eminent Physicians, That the Taste and Property of the Victuals is much alter'd to the worse by the said *Solar Cookery*, the Fricasses being depriv'd of the *Haut Gout* they acquire by being dress'd over Charcoal.

Lastly, Should it happen by an Eclipse of an Extraordinary Length, that this City should be depriv'd of the Sun-Beams for several Months; how will His Majesty's Subjects subsist in the Interim, when common Cookery, with the Arts depending upon it, is totally lost.

In Consideration of these, and many other inconveniences, your Petitioners humbly pray, That your Honours would either totally prohibit the Confining and Manufacturing the Sun-Beams for any of the useful Purposes of Life, or in the ensuing Parliament procure a Tax to be laid upon them, which may answer both the Duty and Price of Coals, and which we humbly conceive cannot be less than Thirty Shillings per Yard Square, reserving the sole Right and Privilege of the *Catoptrical Cookery* to the Royal Society, and to the Commanders and Crew of the Bomb-Vessels, under the Direction of Mr. *Whiston*, for finding out the Longitude, who by Reason of the Remoteness of their Nations, may be reduc'd to Straights for want of Firing.

And we likewise beg that your Honours, as to the forementioned Points, would hear the Reverend Mr. *Flamsted*, who is the Legal Officer appointed by the Government to look after the Heavenly Luminaries, whom we have constituted our Trusty and Learned Solicitor.